

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A flap valve for controlling the air pressure within a protected space defined by walls, said flap valve comprising:

a valve frame attachable to an opening made in said walls,

a valve flap, articulated at least indirectly to said frame and being subjectable to both a sealing force which forces said valve flap against said valve frame and to an opening force which lifts a portion of the flap off said valve frame;

said flap valve having a first position in which said protected space is sealed off from a contaminated environment, and a second position in which air from said protected space is allowed to escape into said environment via said opening;

wherein said sealing force is constituted by at least one spring exerting an adjustable force, which spring is at least indirectly attached to said valve flap and said valve frame and located in a plane substantially parallel to the plane of said valve frame, and wherein said opening force is a predetermined overpressure prevailing within said protected space and acting upon said valve flap through said opening.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3. (original) The flap valve as claimed in claim 1, wherein said valve frame is composed of two juxtapositioned plates attachable to opposite surfaces of wall portions surrounding said opening, by clamping said plates together.

Claim 4. (cancelled)

Claim 5. (currently amended) The flap valve as claimed in claim 1 [[4]], wherein said spring is a torsion spring.

Claim 6. (original) The flap valve as claimed in claim 5, wherein said spring is slipped over an axis at least indirectly affixed to said frame.

Claim 7. (currently amended) The flap valve as claimed in claim 1 6, wherein said flap is hinged to said axis.

Claim 8. (original) The flap valve as claimed in claim 5, further comprising means for adjusting the torsion force of said spring.

Claim 9. (original) The flap valve as claimed in claim 8, wherein said means is constituted by a revolving member to which one end of said spring is attached, while another end of said spring is attached to a hinge of said flap.

Claim 10. (currently amended) The flap valve as claimed in claim 1 5, further comprising a second spring having means for adjusting said opening force.

Claim 11. (original) The flap valve as claimed in claim 10, wherein said second spring is a bent leaf spring extending along one surface of said flap and affixed at one end to said flap while freely bearing against the flap at its other end, and a slider coupled to a slot in the frame and movable along said bent leaf to vary the opening force applied to the surface of said flap.

Claim 12. (original) The flap valve as claimed in claim 11, further comprising a thumb screw for manually affixing said slider along said leaf spring at a preset point.